

DISCUSSION ON RHETORIC

> (Definition of Art - Anything produced by the "arm" of man ["arm" is being used metaphorically to reference etymology]. This is, again, a broad definition which includes the concept of "fine art" that is the most popular connotation of "art". It can be either an idea having only mental existence or a physical **artifact** produced by the "arm" of man from an idea. An unwritten poem passed on from one person to another is an example of the former; a novel, an opera, a sculpture, a space shuttle, or the protocols of medicine are examples of the latter.)

Rhetoric is not the art of persuasion and explanation itself, but the art of selecting the best means of persuasion and explanation from a set of known principles. This must be distinguished from the ancient use of "rhetoric" as oratory only (spoken argumentation), and the modern misuse of the term "rhetoric" which refers to what would more properly be called empty "palaver". Aristotle provided the primary description for this topic, as well.

As a body of knowledge has been grammatically arranged and a logical conclusion has been made from that arrangement, the choice of how best to communicate the conclusion to others must be considered and, in the process, the subject being examined usually comes into an even sharper focus to the author or potential rhetor. At this point of clarity, the entire rhetorical proposition can be called a "statement of rationale". The conclusion and the thought process behind that conclusion have been stated. What is often overlooked when discussing rhetoric is that it can be more than a form of conceptual expression. Due to its product of mental clarity, it can also be used to provide a physical outcome by deducing a "statement of protocols" (a set of instructions) from the statement of rationale. A physical result or a **manufactured** artifact can be actualized by proceeding from grammar, to logic, and on through rhetoric.

The elements of rhetoric are:

1. The five stages (canons) of composition: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.
2. The three types of discourse: deliberative (political), judicial (forensic), and ceremonial (epideictic). They are related to time: future, past, and present tense, respectively.

The Past and Future belong to men; the eternally present Now belongs to the gods.
Aristotle

3. The three **appeals**: rational (Logos), emotional (Pathos), and ethical [ethics of the rhetor] (Ethos). This is shown graphically as the rhetorical triangle, at times.
4. Types of proofs: inartificial (external, objective evidence), artificial (subjectively devised or invented by the rhetor).

5. The **topics**: common topics (genus or kind, comparison, and consequence); special topics (the right and expedient, the just and unjust, praise and blame).

Oration

6. Arrangement: the five parts of classical oration: introduction (exordium), statement of facts, confirmation, refutation, and conclusion (peroration).

7. Style: diction, sentences (length, type, and variety), rhetorical figures (schemes and figures of speech or tropes).

Skilled rhetoricians can use the discipline in two senses. In its most fundamental form, rhetoric is the art of efficiently passing thoughts from one person to others. In its most effective form, it is the art of passing "validated" thoughts from one person to others. By the use of rhetoric, all planned human activity can be co-ordinated (so, give some thought here... this is a two edged sword!).

SUMMARY

> The work of rhetoric is the cogently expressive communication of knowledge and understanding. It leads to a higher levels of knowledge and understanding: the knowing of Knowledge and the understanding of Understanding.

> The effect of rhetoric is to demonstrate the usefulness of knowledge and understanding: that is, to display the wisdom in an article of persuasion or in the formulation of an outcome.

